

End of term Report



Police and Crime Plan 2021-25
Devon, Cornwall & the Isles of Scilly



PCC

Office of the Police and
Crime Commissioner
Devon and Cornwall

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Creating **safe, resilient** and **connected** communities supported by world class sustainable policing

*All figures correct at time of going to press.

Introduction from the Police and Crime Commissioner



The word 'unprecedented' may well have been the English language's most overused word over the last four years. If you look at what we have experienced since I launched my police and crime plan in 2021, it's probably a word that more than any other accurately describes what policing of the public is.

The lingering impact of the pandemic and the rising cost of living has added to our collective burden, and locally, we've had even more to contend with. Extreme weather, a post-Covid resurgence in the number of visitors back to our beautiful two counties and islands, and the truly awful tragedy in Keyham, where lives were lost and a community was deeply affected. We have also responded to genuinely unique operational demands, the most high-profile being the 2021 G7 summit, which saw world leaders come and enjoy the beauty of Carbis Bay.

Yet despite all of this, I am incredibly proud to say that the hard work and dedication that my office and I have put in for you has delivered real results, with some of our work receiving significant national recognition.

We'll talk more about this later in this report, but today as a result of the work of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Devon and Cornwall enjoys the highest number of police officers that it has ever had. We see an estate of police stations and other facilities that has been well-managed, refreshed and renewed where needed, and we have seen a progressive investment in technology and resources. I am delighted to report that having listened to our communities, my programme of reopening police enquiry offices across our cities and towns has already seen 13 open where they are most needed, with more to come.

In 2021 I set the police four priorities – to tackle violence, antisocial behaviour, drugs and road safety – and this report will explain not only what the police have done to achieve my plan, but also what my office and I have done to make sure that this happens. In

addition to these four priority areas, I was also clear about how this all needed to be achieved under an umbrella of being Safe, Resilient and Connected, and these three long-standing principles were again at the heart of my plan. This report will tell you about how all of that has been achieved.

There has been achievement, real, tangible progress, in all of these areas. Yes, there have been some elements of the police service that haven't been good enough, but working with His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) I have been ensuring that the police have been holding and maintaining a focus on these matters, and I am pleased to see major improvements, especially in the centres which deal with emergency and non emergency contact. There is more to do, there always will be, but I am genuinely impressed with the work

that has been undertaken to address all four of my priorities, and despite the challenges and pressures that they have faced, I offer my sincerest thanks to the thousands of dedicated police officers, police staff and volunteers who I know have been working so hard to keep us safe.



I am also very proud of what we have achieved with partners, be they other criminal justice bodies, such as His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS), the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), or charities and other bodies such as Victim Support (whose services we commission on your behalf), or through

our trusted community volunteers who help us make sure that facilities such as our custody centres are working to the standards that we require of them, and through initiatives such as 'Speedwatch' which have contributed so successfully to the safety of our roads.

I do very much hope that you find this report both useful and interesting. Remember, as I have already said, everything that my team and I do is on your behalf, and this report will help you see how the work that your Police and Crime Commissioner has been doing has helped keep Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly as one of the very safest places to live in the United Kingdom, with one of the lowest crime rates in the country.

Alison Hernandez
**Police and Crime Commissioner
Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly**



Introduction from the Chief Constable



In the two years since the publication of the Police and Crime Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan 2021-2025 we have seen significant societal change locally, nationally and globally.

From the ongoing war in Ukraine and the recent conflict in the Middle East to a global pandemic, international events have shaped our communities and had an impact on the way we police within our communities right across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

Throughout this time Devon and Cornwall Police has remained focused on the issues that matter to our communities; detecting crime and protecting the most vulnerable members of our society.

We have continued to deal with significant events in our area and it would be impossible for me to reflect on the last two years without mentioning the devastating shooting in Keyham in 2021; a tragic incident which has had enduring consequences for the bereaved families, affected communities and the force itself.

More recently the HMICFRS identified a number of areas the force must improve in delivering services to the public. As a result we have been working hard to build the service in our contact centre, particularly our 999 answering times; the way we manage sexual and violent offenders and our crime recording processes. In doing so we have worked with the Police and Crime Commissioner and her office to deliver improvements not only in these areas, but across the breadth of the Police and Crime Plan.

We continue to contribute on the national stage and I am proud of the part our officers played in the state funeral of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and the Coronation of His Majesty King Charles III, as well as the regular mutual aid we have given to the Metropolitan Police and others to assist in their duties. The positive feedback we receive on these occasions from the public about the conduct of our officers never fails to make me proud.

As a force, Devon and Cornwall Police recently realigned its own priority areas behind a clear Purpose; to deliver community policing with competence, compassion and a commonsense approach.

Our Purpose will sit at the heart of our approach and gives focus to our aspiration. It will underpin all our actions. To us this is about more than just

neighbourhood policing; it's how all our services and functions deliver, and how they are felt and perceived by our local communities.

Officers and staff across the force will continue to work hard to meet the aims of the Police and Crime Plan and this document details how we have responded and delivered so far against each of the priorities set out by Commissioner Hernandez.

These communities, in which Devon and Cornwall Police are uniquely embedded, hold us in high regard. We have worked hard to gain their trust and respect and they have confidence in us. We must take this opportunity to build on our strengths and to grow into a police force which is truly integrated and connected with its communities.

Jim Colwell
**Acting Chief Constable
Devon and Cornwall Police**



Police and Crime Plan 2021 to 2024 Summary

This document outlines the achievements of the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable from 2021 to 2024, against the 2021 to 2025 Police and Crime Plan. Although the delivery timeline of the current plan extends to 2025, it will be reviewed and renewed in 2024.

The Commissioner's priorities:



The Commissioner's vision for Devon and Cornwall:



Safe

- Focus on our priorities (violence, ASB, drugs and road safety)
- Break the cycle of crime
- Reduce the opportunity for people to reoffend
- Maximise opportunities for visible policing across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly
- Support economic recovery by giving businesses the tools to prevent crime, including cyber crime



Resilient

- Increase public participation with policing
- Support young people to reduce the chances of them falling victim to crime
- Support the rural economy and communities through increased crime prevention
- Influence the Government on key issues affecting Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly
- Strengthen the sustainability of policing and criminal justice services



Connected

- Improve police visibility and increase access points to contact the police
- Develop a broad range of services to make contacting the police easier
- Reflect our communities' needs in the way we work and thrive in diversity
- Improve public confidence through world class local policing

Crime Data - crime levels in Devon and Cornwall

ONS Crime rates (November each year)

2019: No. 5 lowest crime rate in England and Wales
 2021: No. 3 lowest crime rate in England and Wales
 2023: No.1 lowest crime rate in England and Wales

In 2022-23 there were 103,510 crimes recorded in Devon and Cornwall or 57.7 crimes per 1,000 resident population compared to the national average of average of 93.4. In recent years, trends in police recorded crime levels have been significantly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and government restrictions on social contact, so in this report we will sometimes compare to a 'baseline' comparison of 2019 data (pre-pandemic).

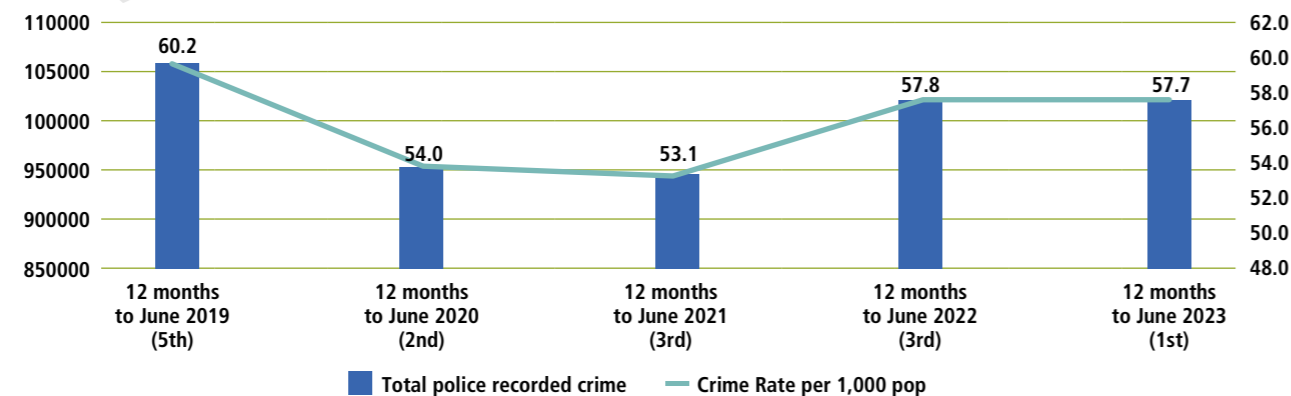
Between 2020 and 2021 decreases were evident across most crime types, particularly theft offences. Since restrictions were lifted following the third national lockdown in early 2021, police recorded crime data indicated that certain offence types were returning to or exceeding the levels seen before the pandemic. Violence, public order, and sexual offences recorded by the police exceeded pre-pandemic levels, while theft offences remain at lower levels.

Despite the more recent increases, police recorded crime levels remain **2.5% lower** than four years ago in contrast to the 5.5% increase nationally.

Numbers of crimes in Devon and Cornwall*
 12 months to June 2019: **106,154**
 12 months to June 2020: **95,632**
 12 months to June 2021: **94,814**
 12 months to June 2023: **103,510**

*rolling 12 months to June

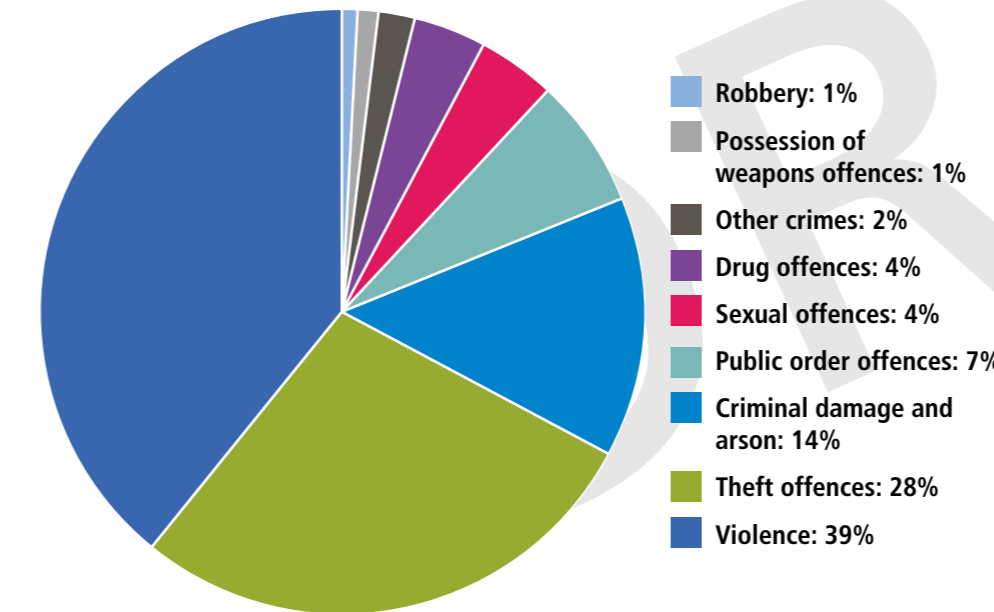
Police recorded crime and rate per 1,000 population



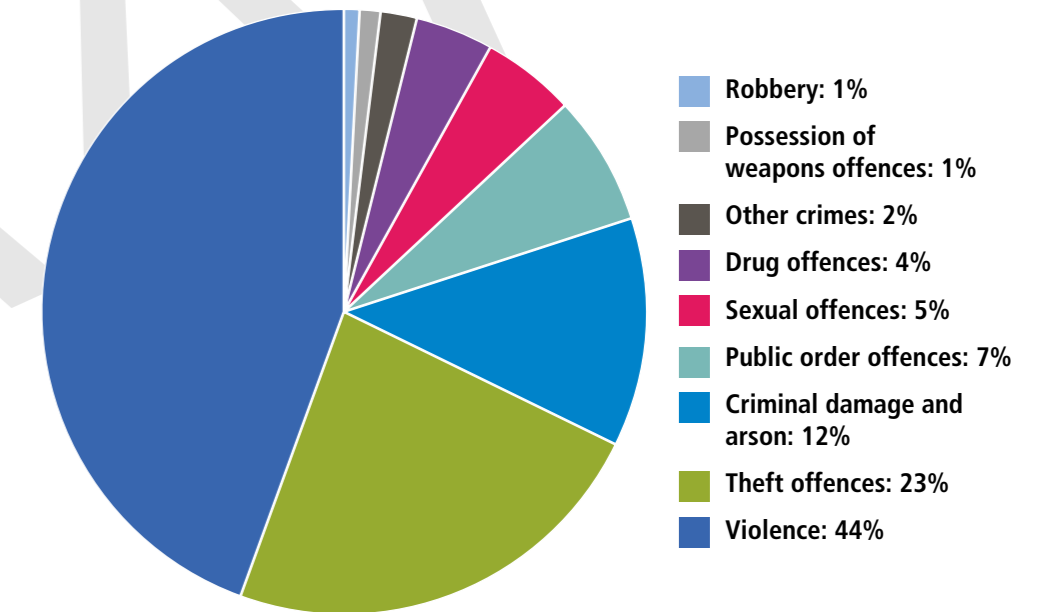
Crime Composition

Since 2019 we have seen some changes in crime types, with increases in violent crime and decreases in theft offences.

Crime composition 12 months to June 2019



Crime composition 12 months to June 2023



Priorities



Violence

The Commissioner's commitments:

- ✓ Actively tackle violence against women and girls, through Safer Streets approaches and by continuing to address the causes and consequences of domestic and sexual violence.
- ✓ Break the cycle of violence by focusing our efforts on prevention and early intervention, and build on innovative support programmes like Operation Encompass and Turning Corners.
- ✓ Provide high quality support to victims of violence through commissioning specialist services to help them to cope and recover, and help more victims to remain in the justice system.
- ✓ Prepare the Serious Violence Programme Partnership to support local authorities and partners to fulfil their forthcoming Serious Violence Duty through sharing accountability, data and expertise.

How has the Police and Crime Commissioner achieved positive progress?

It is well documented how violence can damage communities, and how important it is to support families and young people affected by violence, knowing that this support can significantly reduce the chances of those people becoming victims or perpetrators of violence later in life.

To address the problem of violence in our communities, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has funded and enabled several hard-hitting initiatives.

Key to this is the funding of the Serious Violence Prevention Partnership (SVPP).

The Serious Violence Prevention Programme Budget Summary for 2021-24

	20/21 (£000's)	21/22 (£000's)	22/23 (£000's)	23/24 (£000's)
Total budget allocation	965	1,282	1,669	1,161

This £4m programme is run by the Commissioner and the Chief Constable, and adopts a public health approach to tackling violence, treating it as a preventable consequence of a range of factors, such as adverse early-life experiences, harmful social or community experiences and influences.

With an overarching objective of breaking the cycle of violence, the partnership has focused on three strategic priorities: **People, Partners and Places.**

The Serious Violence Prevention Partnership has matured rapidly over time, developing a clear goal and outcomes. Working closely with partners, it has built a strategic needs assessment and gained a better understanding of the problem which we have shared with partners across the peninsula to assist them in their own new prevention of serious violence duties. This work is seen as an exemplar of its type, and has received national attention.

In addition to the Serious Violence Prevention Partnership, there are multiple examples of other work that has been undertaken to address violence, including:

- ✓ **Supporting young people:** the partnership has actively engaged with young people identified as being most at risk of becoming involved in violence.
- ✓ **A Safer Keyham:** Home Office funding was secured to help recovery from the tragic murders of five people by a gunman who then took his own life. This included additional funding to meet demand for community-led activities through the Keyham Community Sparks Showcase.
- ✓ **Senior leaders event:** the January event engaged a range of partners and was attended by more than 100 stakeholders. It received excellent feedback nationally, regionally and locally and laid the foundations for a strategy and concordat to be adopted across the peninsula.

There are many examples of how the OPCC works with its partners and in collaboration with others to combat violence. These include:

- **Safer Devon:** Young person behaviour change Independent Domestic Violence Advocate; Domestic violence and abuse recovery interventions; Lived experiences work with young people.
- **Safer Cornwall:** Children affected by parental imprisonment referral pathway; Co-designed youth violence reduction project; Serious violence provision scoping exercise.
- **Safer Plymouth:** Family support for young people known to the youth justice system; A referral pathway for young people vulnerable to exploitation into youth justice system.
- **Safer Communities Torbay:** IDVA upskilling programme; Mentorship programme for violence prevention.



To help combat violence, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has also commissioned the following services:

- ✓ **Turning Corners:** Turning Corners is an intervention aimed at improving resilience and life chances of young people through parent support groups, outreach activities and school transition support. **979 young people and 48 parents were supported in 2021-22 and 2022-23.**
- ✓ **Pathfinder Enhanced Offer:** An enhanced scheme for 18-25s and care leavers which provides an in-depth needs assessment and bespoke services, managed by key workers with youth work experience. **98 young people were supported in 2021-22 and 2022-23.**
- ✓ **U+ Programme:** Elemental UK and the Dracaena Centre work in partnership through the U+ programme to provide a preventative and aspirational youth work approach for vulnerable young people.
- ✓ **Restorative Family Work:** Two restorative justice workers have been recruited to run group conferences with families who want things to change. During these sessions harm is acknowledged, and responsibility accepted. **125 families were supported in 2021-22 and 2022-23.**
- ✓ **Interventions following out-of-court resolution panels:** These panels offer young people who have committed an offence a solution which keeps them out of the criminal justice system, instead directing them towards an appropriate intervention to prevent them becoming part of a reoffending cycle. **748 young people engaged in such support in 2021-22 and 2022-23, including 160 young people.**

How have the police delivered the Police and Crime Plan?

Violent crime has a devastating impact on victims, families, and is costly and corrosive to communities. Violence is a complex problem and Devon and Cornwall Police works across the peninsula and closely with partners to reduce violent offending in the community.

Force leaders have identified violence against women and girls, violence linked to organised crime, knife crime, youth related violence and violence in the night-time economy to be a priority for the force.

At street level, perpetrator-focused initiatives such as Project Vigilant and Project NightEye see specially trained officers visibly patrolling hot spots and locations of concern. Driven by the latest intelligence delivered through mobile technology and working with town CCTV to identify, intercept and arrest individuals who are intent on alcohol-fuelled violence and/or those specifically targeting women and girls.

This commitment to actively tackle violence against women and girls continues through the implementation of the national Operation Soteria programme. Aligning with key criminal justice partners, such as the CPS, Soteria dedicates resource and changes how we work and organise our teams to create a victim-centred, suspect-focused approach. This means dedicated,

trained and specialist staff working with victims of sexual violence, specialist decision makers who understand the complexities and challenges with this crime and early engagement with CPS lawyers to maximise the opportunities to bring offenders to justice and hold them to account for their actions.

Dedicated staff also manage high-risk domestic abuse cases within the force, focusing on detailed investigations which support survivors, even if their abuser has influenced the victim to the point that they cannot provide evidence. Since 2021 we have placed a firm focus on the perpetrator's behaviour in domestic abuse cases; solid investigative work by our officers and staff mean evidence led victimless prosecutions provide a voice and opportunity for justice for victims that, in the past, would not have been available. Our role in tackling domestic abuse does not stop with prosecution, Operation Encompass, an award-winning scheme created in Devon and Cornwall, sees the sharing of domestic abuse data with schools. This continues, as it has for more than a

decade, to deliver timely information on those children who have been affected directly by or witnessed domestic abuse, providing urgent, next day support to deal with the consequences and reduce the effects of the trauma, delivering early intervention. Specialist support staff and services such as the Independent Sexual Violence Advisors and Independent Domestic Violence Advocates provided by First Light, Fear Free, Sanctuary and others, all commissioned by the Commissioner, allow police investigators to provide bespoke support for victims of domestic and sexual abuse throughout their criminal justice journey and beyond.

Breaking the cycle of violence through prevention, intervention and reduction of reoffending features heavily and our force continues to lead the way in the deferred prosecution scheme, adopting a diversionary approach and offering alternative options to deal with low level offending. Evidence shows early interventions with tough conditions and close monitoring have proven to lower reoffending rates compared with similar level offences

heard in court. We have provided specialist provision for 18-25 year olds and care leavers, a cohort identified most likely to offend. The service involves dedicated Young Adult Keyworkers and enhanced partnerships focusing on reparation and restoration ensuring victim needs and their voice are included in the process.

For those individuals that present the highest risk Devon and Cornwall Police has invested extensively in the last year in bolstering our Management of Sexual and Violent Offenders (MOSOVO) teams. It is here we have responded positively and rapidly to the feedback and observations provided by HMICFRS. In these teams detectives and staff monitor the growing cohort of high-risk individuals, working closely with intelligence teams, prisons and probation to intrusively manage, with local neighbourhood officers, individuals who present a risk to our community.

The Serious Violence Prevention (SVP) programme has seen 33 projects and initiatives funded and supported across Devon and Cornwall. This includes eight police-led initiatives, 18 partnership interventions and seven identified by the SVP across the region. It has assisted with Home Office grants, including the Keyham Community Project Evaluation and the Safer Streets fund, to reduce antisocial behaviour and combat violence

against women and girls (VAWG). The programme has helped support more than 2,600 young people with additional support offered to 230 families. More than 70 professionals have been trained to work with cohorts at risk of serious violence. Fifty four police officers/ staff and 148 partners have received enhanced trauma competence training and eight more training sessions were due to take place in 2022-24. The programme is working with local partners fulfilling our serious violence duty looking at providing the evidence base for decision making on future priorities. A recent project to use sophisticated algorithms to effectively identify high harm perpetrators within police data before they commit serious violent offences is being considered and this will link other initiatives with our public sector partners to provide interventions aimed at preventing reoffending.

Knife crime remains comparatively low, we however recognise that any criminal use of a knife can cause significant harm. Working alongside partners we are committed to reducing knife possession, and knife-enabled crime. Operational interventions including the purchase of a mobile knife detection arch that can be deployed dynamically reduce the fear of crime and allow us to detect those who carry weapons. We are currently working with young people to build

a web-based educational product that will provide information and enable them to educate themselves and others in preventing knife carrying and knife crime. Community intelligence and crime analysis is used to target overt policing activity into public spaces to deliver encouragement and enforcement. Surrender bins provide the opportunity to dispose of unwanted knives safely, in parallel we are engaging with local retailers, robustly applying existing and new Offensive Weapons Act law, supporting compliance and enforcing where necessary.



Knife surrender bin at Newton Abbot Police Station (©OPCC)



Antisocial behaviour (ASB)

The Commissioner's commitments:

- ✓ Reclaim town centres for the general public from those undertaking ASB, and rebuild public confidence in the public realm and make our city, town and village centres more resilient to ASB.
- ✓ Ensure that victims of persistent and severe ASB in our communities are heard and know how to get help.
- ✓ Increase visible foot patrols to deter ASB in our communities.
- ✓ Work with policing and partners to deliver a robust and targeted approach, using the range of powers available to all partners.

How has the Police and Crime Commissioner achieved positive progress?

Antisocial behaviour – or ASB as it is widely known – can blight neighbourhoods particularly when it is persistent. We know ASB can lead to community tensions, and that if left unaddressed, can seriously impact people’s health, wellbeing and quality of life.

This is why it was so important to have had it as one of our four policing priorities within the Commissioner’s 2021 to 2025 Police and Crime Plan.

Having set it as a priority, the Commissioner has not only continued to – on behalf of the public – hold the Chief Constable to account for his work in this area, but has also helped drive it forward in a number of ways. This has included proactively securing funding and resources, and by working with key partners across our two counties to best ensure a joined-up approach to dealing with antisocial matters.

Examples of this include:

- Providing the force with funding to enable the police to procure the highest quality ASB-specialist support and training. This included rolling out ASB ‘help’ training to 550 officers and partners in 2021-22, and legal powers training in 2022-23.
- Actively supporting and encouraging the Chief Constable in the delivery of intensive hotspot policing specifically targeting antisocial behaviour and nuisance behaviour. The product of this – Operation Loki – is an ongoing success and to date has seen more than 150 arrests made, and more than 300 relevant stops of both people and vehicles.
- Consulting with key partners whenever Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) are being applied for. These PSPOs can be an excellent tool in the reduction of ASB and public nuisances (such as problem drinking and rowdiness) and when used effectively can help rid problem behaviour within our villages, towns and cities, improving the environment for everybody.

Case Study – Legal Powers Training

- Delivered by an experienced barrister
- 10 days across six locations in Devon and Cornwall
- People trained:
 - 332 police officers/staff
 - 81 local authority officers
 - 137 housing officers



Antisocial behaviour case reviews ('Community Triggers')

Tackling antisocial behaviour is the responsibility of a number of several public bodies, including the local authorities and the police. If a member of the public has reported three incidents (or more) within a six-month period they can activate the ASB case review through their local authority. The public also have a right to request a review of the way an application for an ASB case review was dealt with and carried out by the local authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner is the body that will undertake this secondary review.

During the term of this Police and Crime Plan, the OPCC has:

- ✓ Completed four ASB case review escalations
- ✓ Provided recommendations as an outcome to three reviews to local authority partners and other agencies
- ✓ Received responses to those recommendations - one received from the respective council ASB team, and one from ASB Help, who chaired a panel in the second case
- ✓ Received confirmation that action resulted from one case review as a consequence of our recommendations.

In addition to this, OPCC staff have attended seminars and undertaken specialist training in this area, in partnership with the police and local authorities. In 2022, the OPCC carried out a review of the accessibility of the webpages of relevant local authorities across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly on ASB and ASB case reviews, and developed an information pack for local authority partners to help improve this process for the public.

Through our ASB reviews the OPCC has also enabled numerous services to be delivered to ensure that victims of ASB – particularly those who are victims of persistent and severe ASB – are both heard and helped.



Steff Holwill from SPACE gives a presentation to councillors about the ASB outreach service in Plymouth, September 2022 (©OPCC)

To help combat violence, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has also commissioned the following services:

- ✓ **An antisocial behaviour victim support service** to support people affected by ASB to cope and recover, and provide emotional and practical advice and guidance to enable positive outcomes.
- ✓ **An antisocial youth outreach service** to prevent youth ASB escalating to criminality, reduce vulnerability to exploitation and abuse and engage young people in positive engagement opportunities and approaches that draw them away from ASB.
- ✓ **An ASB mediation service** to reduce conflict and prevent escalation to the police, enabling communities to access the self-help tools they need to prevent ASB escalation and increase options for conflict resolution and crime reduction.
- ✓ **An ASB victim support service** to support people affected by ASB to cope and recover and provide emotional and practical advice and guidance to enable positive outcomes.

How have the police delivered the Police and Crime Plan?

The force recognises that antisocial behaviour has a negative and detrimental effect on our communities, and we remain committed to working collaboratively with partner agencies to tackle it head on.

Since 2021 we have experienced several challenges, including a reduction of available resources of council and support services and a withdrawal of non-police enforcement. Despite these, we have continued to work together to tackle ASB through our Community Safety Partnerships and bespoke working groups.

We have an enviable track record of delivering coherent and responsive neighbourhood policing with serious and persistent ASB identified as a priority for all. We have local officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) in every neighbourhood who have a specific role in tackling acute ASB-related issues. In 2021, with the support from investment by the Commissioner, we increased the number of officers in neighbourhoods by 71 and maintained PCSO numbers at 150. This continues; in early 2024 we will further uplift neighbourhood officers by 25, dedicating these to dealing with the most persistent and complex issues facing our communities.

Behind the scenes, the force is investing in legal support and training to help officers to seize the opportunity of using new legislation, such as Criminal Behaviour Orders and Public Space Protection Orders, to effectively target ASB hotspots and the most prolific offenders.

At the start of 2023 we launched Operation Loki, a period of intensification and a clear post-pandemic refocus on ASB that forms part of a long-term strategy to get back to the basics of dealing with street-level nuisance and criminality using a hotspot approach. Through relentless and focused policing, by November 2023 Loki had resulted in 156 arrests, 300 person and vehicle stops, and 30,000 positive interactions with the community through visible policing. This work will continue, and we are committed to retaining a relentless focus on driving down ASB in the 100-plus hotspot 'red zone' areas identified across the two counties.

In addition to tackling ASB, we must be visible and accessible to allow communities to report and support this key area. Working with the Police and Crime Commissioner, we now have 16 front offices open (rising to 21 by February 2024) and are continuing to invest in increasing neighbourhood foot patrols.



Victims and effective partnership working remain at the heart of our approach and work has included:

- The Victim Support ASB Advocacy Service has been implemented to support people and listen to concerns.
- The Devon Mediation Service provides a system for officers and staff to refer individuals resolve disagreements preventing an escalation to ASB and criminality.
- In Cornwall designated ASB caseworkers have been accredited with police powers through the Community Safety Accreditation Scheme (CSAS) to undertake bespoke ASB foot patrols.
- The ASB Case Review (Community Trigger) ensures victims experiencing repeat incidents of ASB can request a review of their case to ensure that all agencies are taking appropriate action. This is fully supported by the force and local authority partners.
- In 2022/3 Safer Streets 4 delivered more than £3m of crimefighting investment to tackle violence against women and girls in Torquay, Truro, Barnstaple, Exeter and Plymouth. Initiatives include increased CCTV and street lighting, a new VAWG rapid response police car in Torquay and development of new safety charters for venues in our night-time economies.
- 2023/4 sees further success with Safer Streets 5 funding, with Paignton, Cambourne and Redruth being awarded more than £800k across the three areas to fund fresh interventions to reduce crime and ASB.





Drugs

The Commissioner's commitments:

- ✓ Encourage people to report drug dealing occurring in their community to the police or Crimestoppers and make the South West a hostile environment for drug dealing.
- ✓ Hold the Chief Constable to account for the effectiveness of the police response to drug trafficking and enforcement both locally and by contributing to regional and national approaches.
- ✓ Encourage robust local partnerships to deliver the services needed to tackle drug demand and supply together through an ADDER approach (Addiction, Diversion, Disruption, Enforcement and Recovery).
- ✓ Raise awareness of the county lines threat and support collaborative and multi-agency approaches to the sharing of intelligence and best practice

How has the Police and Crime Commissioner achieved positive progress?

Drugs can have a devastating social impact on community life and on those who are dependent upon them, having an adverse impact on individuals, families and businesses right across our communities.

This is why the tackling of drugs has been one of the Commissioner’s four policing priorities and, given the clear links between substance misuse and other priorities set out in the Police and Crime Plan, is why drugs are a cross-cutting theme across the wider crime, policing and criminal justice landscape.

In 2022, the OPCC developed a Drugs Strategic Intentions Plan 2022-2025 which focused on:

- Prevention:** Through early intervention and proactive anti-drug driving operations
- People:** Supporting access to drug treatment programmes
- Place:** A zero-tolerance approach to public space drug use
- Partnership:** Collaboration with partners to support system wide change

Combatting Drugs Partnerships

In December 2021 the Government published “From harm to hope: A 10-year drugs plan to cut crime and save lives”. This strategy required the establishment of local dedicated Combatting Drugs Partnerships to bring together action and oversight. Across the peninsula we have four Combatting Drugs Partnerships led by the four upper-tier local authorities. Alongside these the Commissioner has established a peninsular-wide drugs reference group in order to facilitate a shared partnership space to collaborate on the policing and criminal justice aspects of tackling drugs across the two counties.

Crimestoppers

Through the Commissioner’s grant scheme, the office contributes towards the costs of a Crimestoppers Regional Manager for both Devon and Cornwall Police, and Avon and Somerset Police, who has specific responsibility to deliver crime-based campaigns in line

with the priorities of the Police and Crime Plan. Over the last 12 months there have been several hard-hitting drug-related campaigns supporting relating to drugs reporting and road safety associated with drug driving.

In addition, Crimestoppers Zones have been developed in three areas: Devonport (Plymouth), Stonehouse (Plymouth) and Truro. The aim of these zones is to reduce crime, increase reporting and build community confidence and empower people to start local Neighbourhood Watch schemes. In 2022-23, Crimestoppers received 5,155 reports, an increase of 16% on the previous year - significantly higher than the national increase of 6% increase.



Operation Scorpion

Operation Scorpion is a regional, coordinated campaign led by the regional Police and Crime Commissioners to tackle drug-related crime, root out drug dealers, disrupt supplies of drugs and make the South West a hostile environment for drug dealers. The five Police and Crime Commissioners from Wiltshire, Devon and Cornwall, Dorset, Gloucestershire and Avon and Somerset agreed with their respective Chief Constables that their forces would combine operational powers to tackle cross-border drugs supply, drug-related crime and associated antisocial behaviour.

Operation Scorpion, which first took place in March 2022, harnesses collective powers to disrupt drug crime in the South West by dismantling drugs supply networks, arresting those who profit from them, and it means criminals will be under no illusion the South West is #NoPlaceForDrugs. This ongoing operation uses intelligence-led policing to disrupt drug activity and, by working together, improve the public confidence to report local drug-related issues through Crimestoppers, with six major operations undertaken to date.

Operation Scorpion – total results to date

- Total disruptions: **3,272**
- Total arrests: **629**
- People safeguarded: **350+**
- Firearms seized: **19**
- Drugs seized: **213kg+**
- Cash seized: **£950,000+**



Police enter a pub in Plymouth in December 2022 during a phase of Operation Scorpion focussed on drug use in the evening and night-time economy (©OPCC)

To help combat Drugs, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has commissioned a number of services, including:

- ✓ **Funding for drug treatment services for offenders within the criminal justice system** (both adults and children). The breakdown by area in each year was Cornwall Council £130,486; Plymouth City Council £93,575; Devon County Council £60,472; and Torbay Council £50,000.
- ✓ **Funding to Devon and Cornwall Police for Op Medusa** for a researcher and analyst to support the establishment of a drugs intelligence desk providing live time intelligence support to operational initiatives and intensifications, a triage process for digital forensics and critical evidential support for investigations ensuring offenders could be charged and remanded at greater speed.

How have the police delivered the Police and Crime Plan?

Drug abuse is often accompanied by a devastating social impact upon community life, contributing to violence, crime, financial problems, housing problems and homelessness.

Tackling the impact of drugs on society has been a priority for Devon and Cornwall since 2021. We have aligned to and support the government's Harm to Hope Strategic Plan.

We have implemented National Police Chiefs' Council best practice investing additional analysts and researchers within our intelligence directorate. This has increased our capacity and understanding of local drug profiles, so policing resources can have maximum impact on breaking the cycle of drugs. It also allows us to respond effectively to the intelligence the community provides, directly to the police or via important routes such as anonymous reporting via Crimestoppers.

The newly-formed Drugs Desk proactively supports local officers investigating drug trafficking offences committed within our counties, providing advice based on current published best practice. The Drugs Desk produces analytical reports providing greater local geographic understanding for strategic and tactical decision making to pursue and disrupt drug use.

Our Serious and Organised Crime Branch (SOCB) works regionally and nationally, using all appropriate tactical methods to target those transporting drugs into our region, making the South West a hostile environment for organised crime groups to operate within.

Our neighbourhood teams engage and encourage communities and business to increase the reporting of intelligence, information that supports and directs patrols in hotspot areas, using stop and search powers and warrants to disrupt street-level drug trafficking.

Each geographical area across our counties has a dedicated proactive team, who target the middle market of drugs impacting local areas, working closely with the neighbourhood teams and SOCB to ensure reduced drug use and drug related crime.

Across these three departments Devon and Cornwall Police is targeting, local, regional, and national drug trafficking that is having a detrimental impact on our communities.

Since 2021 across towns and cities across Devon and Cornwall, these teams have:

- ✓ Worked with the OPCC to deliver Operation Scorpion, concentrating on towns and cities across Devon and Cornwall. Op Scorpion is a collaboration of South West forces enabling us to target transport networks, bars and nightclubs disrupting funds and supply chains.
- ✓ Delivered intensification periods focusing on transport routes, high-risk offenders, and safeguarding those vulnerable in our society.
- ✓ Conducted targeted patrols, both uniformed and plain clothed, utilising specialist resources such as passive drugs dogs.
- ✓ Made multiple drugs seizures, with individual street values ranging from tens of thousands into hundreds of thousands of pounds. These seizures have resulted in drugs worth millions of pounds being taken out of circulation.
- ✓ Made more than a million pounds' worth of cash seizures. Money goes back to the public to support community projects and initiatives.

- ✓ Enabled the courts to impose cumulative custodial sentences totalling hundreds of years.
- ✓ Delivered Op Orochi and Op Medusa. These are policing operations conducted collaboratively with the Metropolitan and Merseyside police forces to target and dismantle county lines drug dealing networks which originate in London and Liverpool to supply drugs into our region. A considerable number of county lines have been disabled using this approach.
- ✓ Seized cars, boats and removed firearms and other weapons from our streets.

The focus on county lines has safeguarded children and those most vulnerable in our society who have been targeted as a method to supply drugs.

Drug and alcohol partnerships have been set up across Devon, Torbay, Plymouth, and Cornwall. These partnerships are broad and include HM Prisons Service, police, probation, public health, local authorities and support services. This forum brings agencies together to provide a single setting to build understanding and address the shared challenges related to harm caused by drugs. The aim is to reduce the impact of drug and alcohol use as a factor of offending behaviour.

We are building Intensive Multi Agency Panels (IMAPs) across the peninsula, these fast-paced and proactive multiagency panels seek to identify the small cohort of drug users that cause the most harm. Delivering wraparound, intrusive support to provide people the opportunity to stabilise, stop harming themselves and/or other and to rebuild their lives.

This aim achieves better working between local drug/alcohol treatment agencies and local criminal justice partners, improving access to drug and alcohol treatment for people in the criminal justice system, and to increase the number of criminal justice clients with drug and alcohol issues into treatment to reduce the impact of crime and ASB.

A significant part of partnership working focuses on prevention and education, as part of this approach we regularly engage with schools and youth clubs to educate regarding the dangers of drugs and county lines. Our police cadets will often participate in this programme, which is a key part of our prevention activity during county lines intensification periods.

Drug dealers will often identify those most vulnerable people in our society and look to take over their homes to deal drugs. We work together with the

local authority and housing providers to conduct safeguarding visits to those people we believe to have been targeted to protect them and their homes.

Throughout 2024 we will continue to focus locally, regionally, and nationally to deliver the government Hope to Harm Strategy. Maintaining and increasing the approaches listed above, while also uplifting the resourcing of our neighbourhood teams, developing new ways of working to expedite drug investigations and identify every opportunity to reduce drug use within local communities.



Recovery in action: Young people in Keyham, Plymouth, planting a wildflower meadow to commemorate the tragedy of August 2021 (©OPCC)



Road Safety

The Commissioner's commitments:

- ✓ Encourage the trialling of new initiatives to improve road safety.
- ✓ Work with our communities to enable them to play a part in making our roads safer through schemes such as Operation Snap and Community Speedwatch.
- ✓ Play a leading role in the Vision Zero Partnership to reduce death and serious injuries on our roads.
- ✓ Work with partners to deny criminals and those intent on causing harm the use of our roads, including disrupting serious organised criminals using our road networks.

How has the Police and Crime Commissioner achieved positive progress?

While the region is one of the safest when it comes to road safety, even one death or serious injury due to a road traffic collision is one too many. For this reason, road safety is one of the Commissioner’s key Police and Crime Plan priorities.

During the term of the Police and Crime Plan, the Commissioner founded Vision Zero South West (VZSW), a multi-agency partnership from across Devon and Cornwall committed to eradicating death and serious injury from our roads and improving post-collision care. The target is to cut the number of people killed or suffering serious injury on our road network by 50% by 2030, as we work towards Vision Zero.

Since its establishment in August 2021

Vision Zero has:

- Approved two Road Safety Delivery Plans with innovative projects, schemes, pilots and publicity campaigns set to reach an expected audience of millions.
- Allocated more than £150,000 to be spent improving road safety in communities across Devon and Cornwall.

- Launched several successful media campaigns with a strong emphasis on changing the behaviour of road users. This includes projects such as Operation Snap, Road Safety Week, Drink Driving Awareness and Changes to the Highway Code
- Increased **ten-fold** the number of submissions to the Devon and Cornwall Police dashcam footage submission scheme (Operation Snap), through a Gold Award-winning awareness campaign.
- Launched the Vision Zero South West Road Safety Pledge which allows individuals and businesses to sign up to five simple safety commitments and receive regular information from the partnership.
- Hosted the inaugural collaborative Emergency Service Road Safety Village at the Devon County Show.

Additionally:

After a spate of serious and fatal motorcycle collisions in 2022, and driven by detailed research and statistics, the partnership increased focus on prevention and behaviour change. This involved the development of a publicity campaign designed with the Cabinet Office’s behavioural science team and featuring TV presenter Henry Cole, launching the pioneering alongside Devon and Cornwall Police’s drones team, and the provision of a state-of-the-art hazard perception motorbike simulator (due early 2024) which will be used to train motorcyclists across the region.

VZSW is committed to use innovative technology, such as artificial intelligence (AI), to identify drivers not wearing a seatbelt and/or using their mobile phone. VZSW was the first partnership in the UK to pilot this award-winning technology. During a trial of the roadside trailer, positive action was taken against approximately 840 people for not wearing a seatbelt and 620 for using mobile phones while driving.

Case study

‘Call for Ideas’ from Vision Zero South West

In September 2021, VZSW launched a Call for Ideas for a share of £100,000* to deliver small-scale community road safety schemes. Eighty two applications were received of which 34 were supported. The board then took the decision to increase the total funding available to £153,000 to allow all eligible, supported bids to be funded. This included funding 33 Mobile Vehicle Speed Activation Signs, supporting two applications for reflective collars for Livestock on Dartmoor and an application for reflective stickers for schoolchildren, improved signage and a volunteer parking enforcement scheme.

Case study

‘Call for Ideas’ from Vision Zero South West

In 2021, VZSW set up a scheme to loan state-of-the-art dashcams to businesses and organisations who frequently use the A38 across Devon and Cornwall, to aid enforcement and help make our roads safer.

In addition, VZSW also provided cycle cams to cycling groups so that poor driving behaviour could be more easily reported.

As a result of this:

- ✓ Submissions continue to grow as the facility becomes better known to the public thanks to the comms that VZSW put out, and as a result of targeted messaging to certain groups – particularly cyclists
- ✓ A dedicated Op Snap back-office team has been agreed to improve capacity and expertise
- ✓ Recent submissions have exceeded the 800 milestone.

Community Speed Watch

In addition to Vision Zero, the Commissioner supported Community Speedwatch (CSW) schemes which continue to grow, both in terms of popularity and success. Managed by the police, Speedwatch schemes have not only had a beneficial impact upon driving behaviour within our towns, cities and villages, but have also helped bring communities together, with people working together towards a common aim. CSW is welcoming more members each month with 1,461 volunteers on the books as of October 2023 – an increase of 765 since April 2022. In October 2023 alone 262 sessions have taken place, monitoring a total of 39,713 drivers, and recording 1,995 speeding incidents.

To help improve Road Safety, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner has also commissioned the following services:

- ✓ **A Post Collision Victim Support Offer** to offer a trauma responsive post collision support enabling those affected to cope and recover Emotional and practical support, including bereavement counselling where required, alongside peer support and community engagement.

How have the police delivered the Police and Crime Plan?

Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly benefit greatly from the connectivity provided by their complex and mixed road network, but it can also be a source of harm.

In 2021, 647 people were seriously injured and 47 people killed on our roads. These shocking numbers and impact on families and communities led to a commitment from police, the Commissioner and partners to reduce these numbers to zero by 2040. The formation of the Vision Zero Partnership created a coalition, led by the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner and Devon and Cornwall Police with a clear goal to actively address the root causes of deaths and serious injuries on our roads and achieve our vision for zero by 2040.



Community Speed Watch volunteers in action

Over the last three years, and despite the challenges of Covid-19, this partnership remains solid and is seen as a blueprint for how road safety partnerships should be delivered. Accomplishments to date include:

- More than doubling the size of the Roads Policing Team. The force has more than 150 dedicated officers and staff driving the latest vehicles and using technology and intelligence to target persistent offenders, responding effectively to incidents, providing high quality accident investigation and family support and proactively patrolling our roads network.
- A specialist team working with other law enforcement agencies to identify and disrupt the activities of organised criminal networks.
- Establishing a Road Safety Team with a significantly increased speed detection footprint.
- Securing £500k from the Department for Transport to create a Commercial Vehicle dedicated team, increasing surveillance ability.
- Operation Dragoon made use of the newly-funded No Excuse policing team using cars fitted with Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) technology to identify, stop and arrest the most dangerous drivers on our roads.
- The Operation Snap public online video submission portal has taken positive action against more than 9,200 drivers. Since June 2023, there have been 6,507 submissions.
- Through the dedication of volunteers, we have funded a Community Speedwatch team who have increased volunteer numbers and provided more than 2,000 hours of volunteering since October 2022, resulting in almost 2,000 fewer speeding offences, compared with the previous 12 months.

The partnership is at the forefront of innovation with police drones deployed as part of Operation Cosset to monitor high-risk routes where motorbike casualties are disproportionately high. These are used to direct operational resources towards stopping riders who might be putting themselves or others in danger.

Vision Zero has invested £1.3m in camera systems. This enhanced detection capacity resulted in an increase of speeding detections from 47,639 in 2021-22 to 83,711 in 2022-23. Many individuals found to be speeding, dependant on circumstance, were offered educational courses as an alternative for prosecution.

As part of Vision Zero South West, the force is leading the way in the use of new mobile artificial intelligence cameras. These can detect whether a driver is not wearing a seatbelt or is distracted by holding a mobile phone. In one 15-hour deployment 590 offences were captured. Further trials over summer 2023 identified 863 seatbelt offences and 960 mobile phone offences.



A drone monitors a motorcyclist's behaviour as part of Operation Cossett (©DCP)

Your investment; your services

Council tax

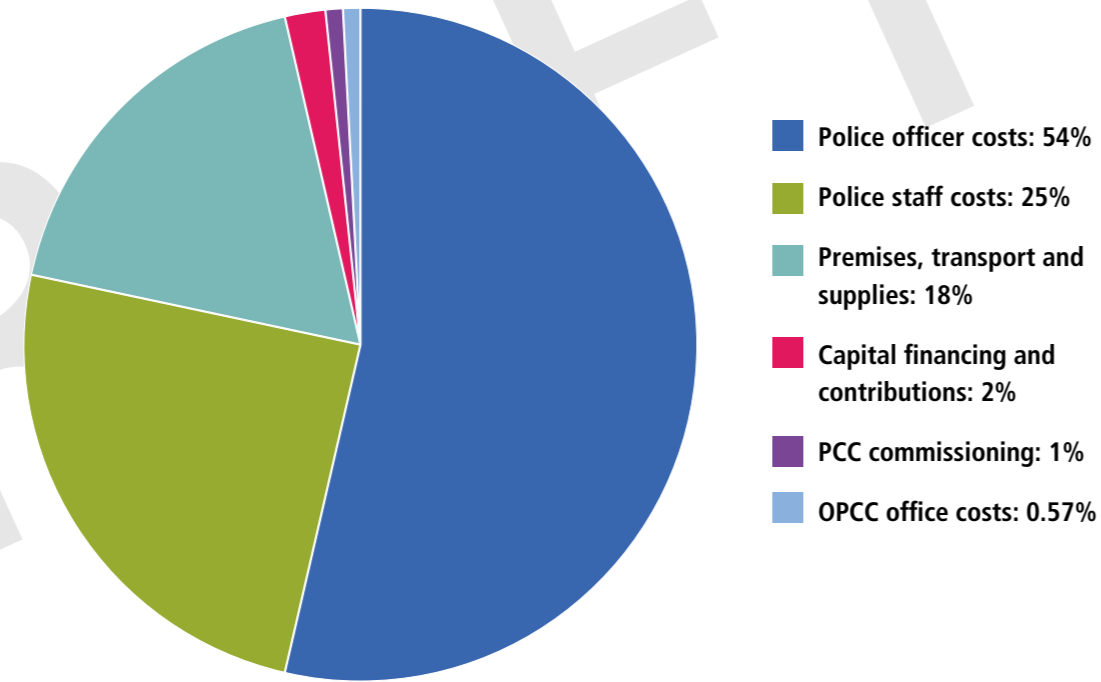
The policing budget is made up of council tax precept payments and a Government grant. The Police and Crime Commissioner sets a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to support the delivery of the Police and Crime Plan. It sets out both the funding available and the forecast spending required to deliver the plan priorities.

Since 2021 the budget process has focused on maintaining the police officer uplift programme, enabling it to be sustained for the long term and continuing to see increased productivity as those officers become more highly trained. Visibility of policing and public confidence is vitally important and the budget has kept police officer numbers at a record high.

Connectivity remains another core focus of the budget and therefore the reopening of Police Enquiry Offices was also increased in the investments since 2021.

How the money is spent:

Main components of 2022/23 revenue budget:



Police officer and staff uplift

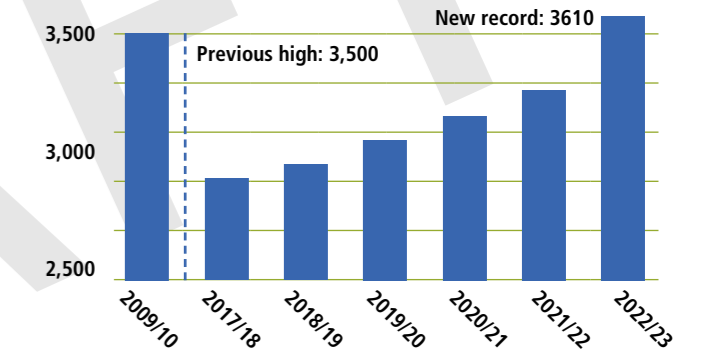
Your policing services are delivered by a strong family of officers, staff, volunteers and partners or contractors who support us. Investments in the size of the workforce have happened alongside a focus on keeping the workforce well while they do very challenging police work.

2021-25 has included the Police Uplift Programme period, which alongside locally funded growth in officers has resulted in an increase in the police workforce in Devon and Cornwall. Police Officer numbers are a record high of 3,610 full time equivalent officers and a headcount of 3,694. Following a period of accelerated recruitment between 2019 and 2023 the organisation is now developing a large number of new officers, recruited and trained to be the workforce of the future. More than 1,250 student officers have joined us between April 2019 and March 2024 alongside more than 440 experienced officers transferring from elsewhere in the country. This balance of student officers who will develop their policing skills in our communities, alongside their more experienced local officers and those who bring

knowledge and skills from the wider policing family creates a strong workforce for the future. This growth has also seen the force move towards better representing its community, with increases in women officers and those from an ethnically diverse background.

The force has also made investments during 2021-25 in police staff roles, with a real focus on public contact through our contact centres and Police Enquiry Offices.

The additional revenues will support record police officer numbers*



A cohort of officers who joined the 'direct to detective' entry route at their 2020 passing out ceremony (©OPCC)



The police uplift programme, combined with local funding, led to record officer numbers in Devon and Cornwall

Police Enquiry Offices

Police stations provide a vital place of safety, and are a reassuring presence in our towns and cities, as well as of course being a place where members of the public can directly report crime or seek help, such as victim services.



Assistant Chief Constable Nikki Leaper joins Police Enquiry Officers and staff at the official opening of Newton Abbot Police Enquiry Office in March 2023. (©OPCC)

In 2022-23, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner worked with the Chief Constable and the estates team to reopen six Police Enquiry Offices (PEOs), creating 24 new police enquiry officer posts across our two counties.

In March 2023 the Commissioner and Chief Constable officially reopened the PEOs in Tiverton, Newton Abbot, Penzance, Falmouth, Truro and Bude. Between October 2023 and February 2024, a further six PEOs are opening in Devonport (opened October 2023), Looe (opened November 2023), Kingsbridge, Okehampton, Ilfracombe and Honiton. Another four will be opening in 2024/25 and 2025/26. In total, £1.5m has been invested in the project.

In addition, the project began to rebuild Exmouth Police Station in East Devon, with a new, public, accessible front desk at the heart of the plans. The Commissioner has made connectivity with the public a cornerstone of her Police and Crime Plans, as face-to-face contact with the public helps victims and provides a long-term solution to rebuilding confidence in policing and reduces the pressure on the 101 phone system.



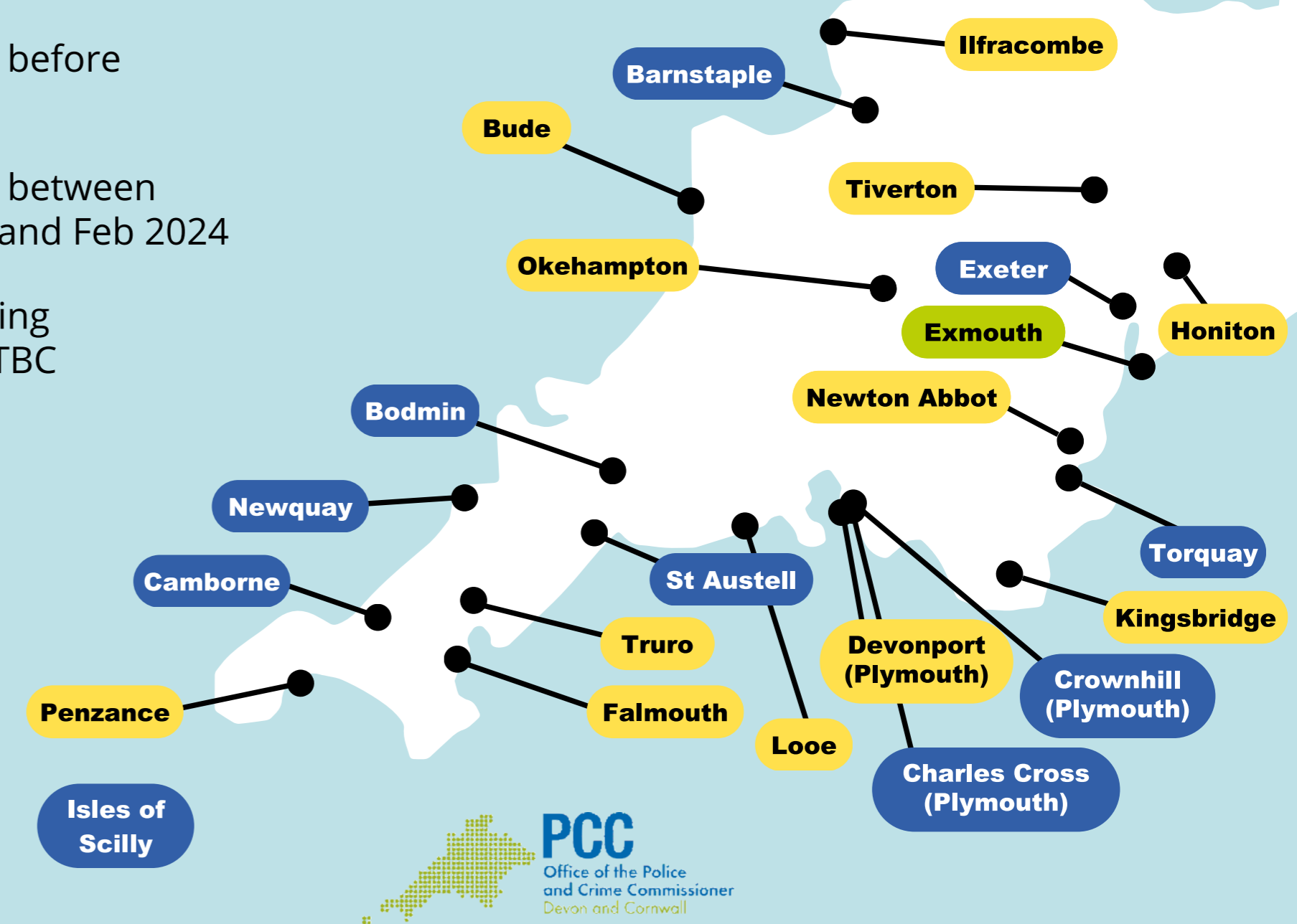
The Commissioner stands outside Penzance Police Station at the official opening launch in March 2023. (©OPCC)

Police enquiry offices

Open before 2016

Open between 2021 and Feb 2024

Opening date TBC



Victim services

The harm caused by crime can be life-changing and sometimes catastrophic and its impact can often last a lifetime. It is therefore important that people of any age affected by crime can access specialist support in Devon and Cornwall to help them when they need it.

The Commissioner has the responsibility to commission victims' services that support victims to:

- Cope with the immediate impacts of crime.
- Recover from the harm experienced.
- Provide greater confidence to victims to help support a criminal action.

Within our commissioning model, the commissioning of most victim care services is contracted to Victim Support, our strategic delivery partner for victim services.

On April 1, 2021, the Commissioner began a 10-year strategic partnership with Victim Support as her strategic delivery partner for victim services with an ambitious vision and mission:

The Commissioner said:

“Together we will put victims at the centre of their own support. Every victim will have an effective assessment and support plan agreed with their advocate, who delivers and coordinates the support they need when they need it to cope and recover from crime.”

The partnership has the following strategic aims:

- To implement a new casework model whereby every victim is offered an independent advocate to work with them to identify and meet their needs
- Simplify and clearly define the core support offer for all victims in Devon and Cornwall to ensure equity
- Increase victim satisfaction with the support they receive to improve public confidence in the criminal justice system
- Improve equality and inclusion

Since 2021 we have:

- Made 27 community support services available for victims
- Referred over 60,000 victims to support services
- Created a Local Partnership Fund to support Local Authorities and community safety partnerships to meet the Serious Violence Prevention programme's strategic priorities and deliver the Serious Violence Duty.
- Introduced a Post Collision Victim Support Offer for victims of serious road traffic incidents

Through Victim Support created:

- A crime trauma therapy service – for some time now there has been therapeutic support available to victims of serious road collisions, domestic abuse or sexual violence. From October 2023 crime trauma therapy has been made available to all victims, where a need is assessed, irrespective of crime type.
- Sexual violence support service – independent support for adults who do not want to report to police, including trauma stabilisation, therapy, advocacy, practical and emotional support.



Vision



How has the Police and Crime Commissioner achieved positive progress?

Within her plan, the Commissioner wrote: “I want to ensure that all our many different and diverse communities feel safe by reducing crime and disorder.”

The period covered by the 2021 to 2025 plan was exceptionally unusual, covering among many things the Covid-19 pandemic and the aftereffects of lockdown, which all had a direct impact upon both the rate of, and type of, crimes committed across our region.

A number of crime types, including burglary of domestic properties - a particularly distressing crime - fell significantly, and currently for a number of offences we are still some way below pre-Covid-19 figures. However, other types of crime, such as domestic-related abuse and hate crime, have risen in the same period.

It is of note that these increases follow national trends with all police forces across England and Wales experiencing an increase in crime. However, owing to a number of factors including the approach taken by our police, Devon and Cornwall has the lowest crime rates and continues to be the safest part of the UK to live in.

When crime does happen, Devon and Cornwall Police are seen as exceptionally ‘hard-hitting’, with Exeter and Plymouth taking first and second place in a national table of UK cities that are seen to be ‘toughest’ on crime, reporting the highest percentage of crimes resulting in a charge.



The Commissioner presenting an Westcountry Women Award for the sponsored ‘Combating Violence Against Women and Girls Award’ in recognition of work being done to keep women safe, December 2023. (©Steven G Haywood)

To help make our area one of the safest in the country, highlights of what the Commissioner and her team have achieved include:

- ✓ **To break the cycle of crime and reduce reoffending** – the Commissioner chairs both the Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB) and the regional Reducing Reoffending Board, to help ensure that there is a crosscutting focus on community safety across the policing and wider justice landscapes.
- ✓ **To champion community cohesion and tackle hate crime** – the OPCC undertook an extensive piece of work to scrutinise the police’s approach to dealing with of hate crime, the outcomes of which are available on the OPCC website.
- ✓ **To maximise opportunities for visible policing across Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly** – the Commissioner has not only secured sufficient funding to allow police officer number across Devon and Cornwall to reach record numbers, but has also been at the forefront of enabling the reopening of Police Enquiry Offices across the force area, with more to come.



The Commissioner joins ACC Nikki Leaper, Inspector Timothy Evans, Inspector Richard Hockin, Police Enquiry Officer Supervisor Ian Woods, Sgt Christopher Vincent along with Falmouth and Penryn Town Mayors and local councillors at the official opening of Falmouth Police Enquiry Office in March 2023. (©OPCC)

How have the police delivered the Police and Crime Plan?

Visibility of the police builds confidence and increases communication which in turn develops intelligence for us to respond effectively to the needs of our communities.

We are here to keep people safe, with reassurance to the public delivered through seeing police officers and staff within our communities, identifying and responding to their issues.

Since 2021 we have recruited more than 1,600 officers, providing Devon and Cornwall with the highest recorded numbers of police in its history. From the outset student officers undertake practical, visible training in towns across the force and once deployed the majority have gone on to work within patrol and neighbourhood teams.

Police Community Support Officers and the Special Constabulary provide additional visible and vital resource and service to policing. Community Safety Accredited Schemes empower partners with designated policing powers and these individuals are

visible to the public when undertaking their day-to-day roles. Next year will see the introduction of two mobile police stations which will maximise accessibility of police resources, specifically in more rural and isolated locations.

Engagement and support to local business is achieved through our neighbourhood teams. We recognise that engagement and prevention with retail crime needs to increase and for business owners to grow in confidence that we will respond effectively. We are committed to this, embracing the government's Retail Crime Action Plan, and have appointed a Business Crime Lead to ensure we deliver the plan to its fullest. We have recently participated in the first Safer Business Week of action which centred around shoplifting, evolving and embedding the learning identified through our local policing teams.



Levels of reported hate crime are rising, a function of greater confidence in the police's response, but also reflecting polarised views on issues within society and wider politics. The Diverse Communities and Neighbourhood Teams are building trust with our harder to reach communities promoting the reporting of hate crime. The OPCC conducted an independent hate crime scrutiny inquiry, we have welcomed the conclusions which indicate we are working hard to tackle the challenges faced by victims and improve service. The report has also provided a clear roadmap to continue to develop our offering. Scrutiny, feedback and advice is also provided through a cohort of independent advisors, and we participate regionally with forces through the Regional Hate Crime Working Group, all demonstrating our intent to excel in this complex, impactful and important area.

To break the cycle of crime and reduce the opportunity for people to reoffend the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) team manages the most prolific offenders that cause harm. We regularly review the effectiveness of this service; at the beginning of 2023 data indicated that 82% of offenders engaged with our specialist team did not reoffend. Offenders have an appointed police officer co-located with probation, housing, drugs and alcohol, and mental and physical health services and collaboratively they work to stabilise the environment for the offender and provide a robust, intrusive but supportive network. This service continues to grow in sophistication and reach, recently focusing on the creation of a referral mechanism to link domestic abuse perpetrators into behaviour change programmes.



How has the Police and Crime Commissioner achieved positive progress?

In the context of the Police and Crime Plan, resilience is about giving communities the tools and knowledge they need to keep themselves safe. Resilience is about building trust, and about ensuring that a good service is provided to help victims cope and recover from crime. Across Devon and Cornwall, the Commissioner has worked closely with our communities to achieve this.

We now have hundreds of people volunteering across the force area, in roles such as Special Constables, Police Cadets, independent custody visitors, and community scrutiny panel members. We also have one of the strongest Community Speedwatch networks in the country, with whom we enjoy a successful, productive relationship.

To help communities build resilience, the Commissioner has worked hard with her partners to help secure funding, and in the years 2021 to 2023, secured an additional £9.3m to help communities prevent and respond to crime. The Commissioner has also been instrumental in leading local and regional partnerships to deliver work to strengthen policing and criminal justice systems across the region including Operation Scorpion, Vision Zero South West and the Local Criminal Justice Board.

This included £5.5m awarded in 2022-23 alone, which helped deliver a number of projects across our force area, including:

- ✓ More than £3m to fund local prevention activity across Truro, Torquay, Barnstaple, Plymouth and Exeter via the Home Office's Safer Streets fund.
- ✓ £789,295 to increase funding for victim services, including support for victims of sexual violence and domestic abuse.
- ✓ £417,395 to work with domestic abuse perpetrators across Devon and Cornwall, helping to prevent future offending and address their behaviour.
- ✓ Nearly £400,000 to help fund activity to prevent serious violence across Devon and Cornwall.

The Commissioner chairs the Devon and Cornwall Local Criminal Justice Board (LCJB), bringing partners together to improve the experiences of victims and witnesses, reduce reoffending, identify shared priorities, address cross-cutting issues, and deliver agreed objectives to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the local criminal justice system.

Over the past four years, successes of the LCJB include:

- ✓ The rapid development and implementation of 'virtual', remote courts during the Covid pandemic.
- ✓ Securing funding for the implementation of court-provided Mental Health Treatment Requirements which has now been expanded to all areas in the South West.
- ✓ Putting in place an extensive programme of scrutiny across the criminal justice system to ensure that all agencies were meeting their obligations to provide an appropriate service to victims.
- ✓ Introducing a multimedia video resource to assist victims and witnesses in navigating what we know can be a difficult and at times confusing landscape.

DEVON AND CORNWALL
CRIMINAL JUSTICE BOARD

Criminal Justice System: working together for the public



To improve the resilience of our communities, the Commissioner has:

- ✓ Increased public participation with policing in numerous ways, including independent custody visitors, councillor advocates, community scrutiny panels & managing the arrangements for independent legally qualified chairs in police misconduct cases.
- ✓ Supported young people through our Serious Violence Prevention Programme
- ✓ Supported victims and witnesses, helping them get justice, through the commissioning of victim services, working with partners such as Victim Support, and reviewing complaints against the police to ensure that the outcomes are both reasonable and proportionate.
- ✓ Supported the rural economy and communities by ensuring that the voice of our rural communities is represented at all levels, including the successful escalation of rural crime as not only a force, but a regional priority across the entire South West.
- ✓ Strengthen the sustainability of policing and criminal justice services through our local and regional partnership work.



OPCC Staff member Bridget Batchelor discussion policing priorities with female student from Exeter University in December 2023. (©OPCC)

How have the police delivered the Police and Crime Plan?

Daily our officers and staff undertake hundreds of interactions with our community. Devon and Cornwall Police is the home of neighbourhood policing and in our rural communities, towns and cities local officers and staff engage regularly through surgeries, public meetings and daily policing.

To ensure we remain relevant and connected, contributing to building the resilience of those we serve, Devon and Cornwall Police provides a range of additional opportunities to participate in policing through a variety of volunteering arrangements.

Our more than 200-strong team of Special Constables provide more than 4,000 hours of service each month and Police Support Volunteer opportunities include a broad range of roles such as chaplaincy, wellbeing support, cyber volunteers, custody visitors, drivers and local policing support volunteers. We have a thriving cadet programme for young people aged 13 to 17, a Mini Police programme for primary schools and a Girl Guiding Policing Badge in Devon is currently being launched. We have established a Volunteer Forum giving a public voice into identifying community needs and suggestions.

Young people in our community face a range of new and emerging threats and challenges, building resilience, supporting and being responsive to this group is a high priority for us. This starts with being able to respond quickly and effectively when a young person becomes a victim of crime, to provide an effective response and help them recover. A large percentage of our investigative strength is focused on the protection of young people. Our Public Protection Unit delivers high quality investigations into the most sensitive cases of child abuse and neglect, seeking swift justice and pursuing, arresting and prosecuting those who harm the most vulnerable in our community – be they on our streets or online. This team works hand in glove with schools, local authorities and other children’s services through dedicated multi-agency hubs, sharing intelligence and proactively safeguarding young people.

To help young people bounce back from the impacts of crime effectively we work with specialist child-centred services to provide the support they and their family needs to recover and remain resilient.

Devon and Cornwall Police has a dedicated, award-winning Rural Policing Team, prioritising engagement with farms, isolated communities and businesses and bringing a deep understanding of the unique challenges these communities face, from fly tipping and machinery theft to equine crime and livestock offences. We have an evolved approach to heritage crime protecting the more than 36,000 designated heritage sites and assets. The force is committed to deliver the National Police Chiefs’ Council’s Rural and Wildlife Crime Strategy. While Devon and Cornwall enjoys low crime rates there has been an 8% increase in rural crime and a 25% increase in wildlife crime.

Our Rural Policing Team is uniquely placed with good operational links and a clear understanding of the specific powers and tactics required to tackle these issues in our rural communities. The force has an ongoing relationship with Community Watch Associations, and we maintain our well-established alert system, including Farm Watch, where people can sign up and receive targeted, focused messaging and early warnings.



Supporting victims and witnesses and progressing cases efficiently through the court system is key to delivering compassionate justice and we have a central role in achieving this. It is fair to say that in the last two years the challenges of large backlogs within the wider criminal justice system have adversely affected victims and witnesses. Investigating officers and specialist staff

in the force undertake a joint journey with victims and witnesses over extended periods, running into years, to help build and maintain resilience and provide support and information through the process.

Within the force we place a strong focus on Victim Care, Witness Care and Criminal Justice departments, drawing them into a central command. This has delivered improved working practices to identify vulnerable victims and signpost them to OPCC commissioned services and provided better information to victims and witnesses helping build resilience and understanding of their criminal justice journey. Trained officers ensure that, at the front end, victim rights are at the heart of their work – new services such as the digitally delivered LEPH Link (Law Enforcement Public Health) allow officers to refer people instantly to bespoke support services. Despite the challenges in the system our last victim satisfaction survey targeted at priority victims produced an overall satisfaction rate of 77%. We are not complacent with this level of support, and seek to continually improve our offering with the force embarking on a reform to its criminal justice services, the vital link between officers and the courts:

- We are procuring a new cloud-based digital evidence system to manage evidence.
- Implemented changes to our technology that will provide quicker notification of court results.
- We have led nationally on the virtual attendance of officers at court to reduce the time spent in an office, getting them back on the street.
- Launched an Evidence Review Hub to gain quicker decisions on cases to reduce the time victims spend waiting to understand the next steps.
- Enhanced case file building training for our 3,000 investigators, being delivered now and into 2024.

We monitor closely the performance of our work in this area, we are active in the Local Criminal Justice Board, a group led by the Commissioner that draws together criminal partners across the peninsula to improve and work through the challenges the criminal justice system faces. We will continue to improve our own services and seek to influence the wider criminal justice system positively, advocating for victims and witnesses at every opportunity.

How has the Police and Crime Commissioner achieved positive progress?

Ensuring members of the public can contact the police whenever they need them, in a timely and efficient manner, is vital for maintaining public confidence.

Some people may prefer to speak to a police officer or member of police staff in person. The Commissioner has made connectivity with the public a cornerstone of her Police and Crime Plans, arguing that face-to-face contact with the public helps victims and provides a long-term solution to rebuilding confidence in policing.

Since 2021 14 Police Enquiry Offices have been opened, with a further four being opened before March 2024, and another four before March 2026. Twenty-four new police enquiry officer posts have already been created and more staff are now being recruited in the new locations. New technology means that when not dealing with face-to-face enquiries they can reduce demand to the police contact unit by dealing with emails and web enquiries.



Police Enquiry Officer and Supervisor Ian Wood attends to work (©OPCC)

Improving public contact has been a priority for the Commissioner throughout the term of this Police and Crime Plan. The need for improvement in public contact, particularly call answering times, was identified by His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services in the 2021-22 PEEL assessment of Devon and Cornwall Police. Before this, the need for improvement had already been identified by the Commissioner and has been monitored by consistently, as demonstrated in her 2020 scrutiny of 101 reported to the Panel (published on the OPCC website).

In November 2022 the Commissioner wrote to the Chief Constable to confirm her clear expectations for service improvement in four areas and since this time has welcomed clear and sustained improvement in contact performance:

90% of 999 calls should be answered within 10 seconds by the end of 2022	Achieved ✓ 90% was achieved in December 2022. Progress has been made within 2023 with over 90% consistently achieved since August 2023.
All 101 calls (P1 and P2) should be triaged by the end of November 2022	Achieved ✓ The triage function went live in November 2022.
A 101 callback function of AACCC7 must be delivered as a top priority	Achieved ✓ The callback function went live in September 2023
Re-opening of front desks with a new plan for the next six locations	Achieved ✓ Six front desks were re-opened in 2022-23 and a further six are being opened in 2023-24

How have the police delivered the Police and Crime Plan?

Being visible and able to connect with people is essential and multi-dimensional, via telephone, video, through social media or in person, the community need to know how to access us and for police to be close.

We have developed a broad range of services to make contacting us easier. Our 999 service has significantly improved, with more than 90% of 999 calls answered within 10 seconds. We have addressed how we handle our non-emergency calls, they are now more efficient and effective with monthly improvements in answering

times. This is due, in part, to the introduction of an upgraded telephony system that automatically balances the availability of colleagues between 999 and 101 calls, allowing us to always be there for those in need while effectively helping those with important, but less urgent needs. Our callback service, asked for by the public, has a 97% success rate at getting back to people on the same day and our response times to digital communication are at the fastest ever.

The use of webchat is paused while we seek to improve our performance more widely but there are plans to reintroduce it in the future. Most significantly, and with the valuable support of the OPCC, we are proud to be opening an additional 12 police enquiry offices by the end of the 2023-24 financial year.

We have adopted the Police Race Action Plan, to ensure that we are improving policing for Black communities, building an anti-racist police service and address race disparities affecting Black people

working within or interacting with policing. This is monitored by our Strategic Legitimacy Board, and Independent Community Advisory Board focusing on our recruitment, culture, use of powers, community relations and victim service. We have increased the representation of our officers identifying as Black, Asian, or ethnically diverse by 37.5%.

The HMICFRS have reported that Devon and Cornwall Police has a mature understanding of the needs of its communities and takes an inclusive, appropriately tailored approach to working with the public. Our collaboration to tackle crime in partnership provides locally focused tasking meetings that are attended by partners in conjunction with local police teams to discuss and respond to issues and tackle crime. Investment in two dedicated neighbourhood trainers will seek to professionalise neighbourhood policing and provide enhanced training, particularly relating to problem solving.



Torquay Station's Police Enquiry Officer Portia Lear seen here dealing with 101 customer enquiries when not dealing with the public face to face. (©OPCC)



Partnerships and collaborations

Partnership working is fundamental to how the OPCC and Devon and Cornwall Police deliver the Police and Crime Plan across the boundaries of Devon, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly as well as across the South West policing region.

There have been some notable successes, which include:

Local partnerships

- ✓ The OPCC secured almost £1,160,000 funding to assist with the Keyham recovery programme from the Ministry of Justice and driving the evaluation of the investment over the following three years.
- ✓ The creation of the Vision Zero Partnership with multiple partners with interest in improving road safety and a renewed focus on reducing road deaths on our roads, the longest network in England.
- ✓ The establishment of a 10-year strategic partnership with Victim Support to ensure that victims of crime receive appropriate support and services to assist with their recovery.
- ✓ The Commissioner's grant scheme is being delivered in partnership with Devon Community Foundation (DCF) and Cornwall Community Foundation (CCF) and aims to benefit small and medium-sized organisations whose work contributes to the Commissioner's Police and Crime Plan.
- ✓ Community Safety Partnership and Youth Offending Teams have been supported through £6.4m in grant funding to enable community safety interventions, reduce youth crime and prevent serious violence.
- ✓ Participation in Combatting Drugs Partnerships, and the establishment of a Peninsula Drugs and Alcohol Reference Group to bring together the strategic leads from the four upper tier local authority partnerships.



Strategic partnerships

- Hosted by Devon and Cornwall OPCC, the five PCCs in the South West have established a Prisoners Building Homes collaboration with the government's One Public Estates programme and the private sector to provide meaningful, skilled, paid employment to those within the prison system which is delivering new homes in communities across the South West.
- Through a strategic partnership between Devon and Cornwall Police and the Police and Crime Commissioner the successful delivery of the prevention of serious violence programme through targeted investment of £4m based on the needs identified and the development of hallmarks of best practice for the peninsula.
- Regional Policing Collaborations are delivering £46m of specialist police services including the Regional and Organised Crime Unit and forensic services.
- The Blue Light Officer roles of Tri-Service Safety Officer and Community Responders which were created specifically to address capacity in rural areas. A Tri-Service Safety Officer is trained as an antisocial behaviour officer, firefighter and ambulance first responder. Employed through Cornwall Council (with the costs shared by police, fire and ambulance) these officers are accountable to all three agencies and are an invaluable resource to maintain a rural, uniformed presence in communities. A Community Responder is a fully warranted Special Constable who is also a retained firefighter. In addition, we have created a small team of Police and Fire Community Support Officers (PFCSOs) operating across North Devon.
- The Commissioner invested additional resources to tackle crime and antisocial behaviour in 20 key summer locations across the two counties ahead of the easing of Covid-19 restrictions and a summer surge in visitors. This investment continues through the additional multimillion-pound investment funding secured as part of the Safer Streets programme.
- Continued collaboration of local criminal justice partners to identify and tackle a wide range of issues to ensure that victims receive appropriate justice and there are clear pathways for offenders to be rehabilitated. Among these wide-ranging issues, this joint work has included a focus on the dignity of women in the criminal justice system and the widening of support services to ensure that the needs of all victims are met.

Case Study

Prisoners Building Homes

The award-winning Prisoners Building Homes (PBH) Programme started life with a pilot project in Torquay, which in 2021 delivered a low carbon social home, funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner and in partnership with the Ministry of Justice, HM Prison and Probation Service and the Ministry of Justice.

It is now led by the five South West Police and Crime Commissioners under the auspices of the South West Reducing Reoffending Partnership (with representatives from HM Prison and Probation Service, Ministry of Justice, the Police, NHS England, Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, Youth Justice Board, Department of Work & Pensions, South West Councils, and the Voluntary Sector). The Programme is also supported by One Public Estate, which is a partnership between the Office of Government Property in the Cabinet Office, the Local Government Association and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

The Programme was set up to enable prisoners to be employed and trained by specialists to build homes for local communities and vulnerable people. It provides an opportunity to reduce reoffending by ensuring prisoners have the skills they need to help secure employment upon their release.

Following the success of the pilot, the programme was awarded One Public Estate funding to develop a framework which enables public sector organisations to easily access high quality, low carbon modular homes constructed and assembled by prisoners and ex-offenders. An experienced specialised

programme manager works with the PBH accredited modular housing providers to provide an end-to-end development service, driving projects forward to deliver much needed affordable new homes at pace for the benefit of local communities, whilst providing meaningful and productive work and nationally accredited training to upskill serving prisoners enabling them to secure job opportunities post release. It also produces public sector cost and social value savings.

By the end of 2023 the programme had 40 serving/ recently released prisoners in full time employment either through day release/post-release opportunities;

and another 40 prisoners employed by opening disused prison workshops. Nine prisons across the country are benefitting from the programme, with plans under way to involve more.

There are seven housing providers on the framework delivering 82 homes across 14 sites (with further pipeline sites under review). This is in addition to the hundreds of homes the housing providers on the framework are delivering separately, all made by prisoners.

The Programme won a prestigious national Government Property Award (2023) for innovative collaboration for bringing together public and private sector partners to unlock land and deliver affordable, high-quality, low carbon, sustainable modular homes nationally; while creating job opportunities for serving prisoners and prison leavers to enable them to turn their lives around and reduce the cycle of reoffending.

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